

House Education & the Workforce Committee

John Boehner, Chairman

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FACT SHEET

A “Safety Valve” for Students Trapped in Failing Schools

A key goal of the *No Child Left Behind* plan is to provide children trapped in chronically failing schools a way out -- a “safety valve.” **The Chairman’s Mark of H.R. 1 includes private school choice** as proposed by President Bush, and Republicans will continue to fight to give this option to the parents of children in failing schools.

In addition, Republican and Democrat staff on the House Education and the Workforce Committee have tentatively reached an agreement that would provide **immediate public school choice (including the option of transferring to charter schools) for children in schools identified as failing after just one year.** The President’s original plan gave children that option after two years of failure. Democrats have also tentatively agreed to allow children in failing schools to obtain supplemental educational services such as tutoring -- **including tutoring by private, religious-affiliated providers** -- after three years, as originally proposed by President Bush.

H.R. 1 empowers parents with new options and offers new hope for students in failing schools:

- **Supplemental Services:** Parents will choose from a list of providers that meet certain criteria to provide supplementary educational services -- including tutoring, after-school services, and summer school programs. Of note, **private religious providers would be among those eligible to provide supplemental services** as long as they are on the list developed by states in conjunction with local school districts (as under H.R. 1 as it was introduced).

Parents will choose a provider and notify the school district of their choice. School districts will then contract with the provider and, with parents, develop a statement of specific performance goals for the student, how the student’s progress will be measured, and a timetable for improving the student’s achievement levels.

- Up to 40 percent of a school’s Title 1 allocation may be used to provide supplemental services. (This cap will ensure that a reasonable amount of funds remain at the school for upgrading the quality of the school.) In addition, school districts may also use Title IV, Part A funds (innovative programs) to pay for these services. And, if necessary, states may use their Title IV, Part A funds to provide school districts extra funds.
- School districts may use up to 15 percent of their Title 1 funds for transportation costs.
- **Public School Choice:** The agreement will also extend school choice opportunities to children in chronically failing schools. **It gives parents the option of removing their children from failing schools immediately after the school is identified as failing and sending them to another, better-performing public school of their choice.**

